

Camp Near Newtown, Va

Nov.17th 1864

Dear Mother,

I *recieved* your letter of the 3rd about a week ago and one of the 8th yesterday and was glad to hear that you were all well. Since I wrote you last, we have fallen back about eight miles from Cedar Creek, our former position. We did not get much rest for three or four days after we got back here for we had to go to work building breastworks. We had to work night and day, what time we was not at work, we were under arms with everything packed up.

We expected we should have another fight, for they appeared rather bold. We skirmished with them for two days, they *finally* found that Phil and his whole family were at home so they thought they had better get back, they have gone to New Market, a distance of about 50 miles.

We have got orders to fix up for winter quarters, we got the order about an hour ago, and the boys have started out for lumber, they made a charge on two farms right close to camp and had them all torn to pieces before the officers could stop them. I have got boards enough to make quite a comfortable hut for the winter.

I must write Lute a few lines.

Give my love to all.

Frantz

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Dear Sister Lute,

I suppose you begin to think by this time that I do not intend to write to you, you speak about writing to me but I ~~never~~ have not *recieved* any, only what you wrote in mother's.

You want to know how I spend my time, well, I can tell you, in the first thing on the programme is the drum beats the reverie at four o'clock in the morning, every man has to be in line behind the breastworks with guns and accoutrements on and stand there till after daylight, that we have had to do since Mr. Early *surprised* us on the 19th of Oct. they don't want him to repeat the *operation* again, although he got the worst of it in the end.

The next thing is to get our breakfast which don't take long.

The next comes drill at nine o'clock *untill* eleven. The idea of drilling old soldiers our boys don't think much of if we halt more than one day in a place our brigade commander will issue orders for drill. We had orders to drill as usual the other day and it was not fifteen minutes after the Johnnies came rushing on to our pickets and came in sight of camp, we thought we was agoing to have a chance to drill in earnest but did not, we went out and had a skirmish with them but they *skedadled*.

Well, we fall in for drill again at two o'clock and come in at four. Dress parade at five, roll call at six, another at eight which ends the day, so you can see how much *lesure* time I get to my self.

You want to know if I ever hear from Em. I have had one letter from *here* in one year and that I got a few days ago. You think I must get awful homesick. I am happy to say that you have got the wrong impression altogether, it is a disease that I don't let trouble me at all. I was half inclined to be Homesick this morning when the order came to fix up for winter quarters, for we are situated on a cold knoll and have to go ~~about~~ three quarters of a mile for water and wood.

I hope we shall move back to some place more suitable.

I have written a longer letter than I am in a habit of writing, so I will close.

Give my love to all, and write often.

Your aff. Brother,

J. F. Brand